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ABSTRACT

Central East Middle School in Philadelphia (Pennsylvania), an urban school with about 45% Hispanic enrollment, and the Center for Research on the Education of Children Placed at Risk are working together to implement a Talent Development Middle School model of schooling. Part of this effort includes use of the Student Team Reading (STR) Program, which changes both the instructional processes and curriculum in Reading, English, and Language Arts (RELA) to create a motivational climate that is conducive to learning and personal development. Teachers at Central East Middle School were trained in STR in the summer of 1995 and received curricular materials and technical support throughout the first semester of the 1995-1996 school year. Implementation and outcome data were collected in February 1996 at the school and a matched comparison school from 1,776 students from 72 RELA classrooms, 34 of which were at Central East Middle School. Hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) analyses revealed that STR was used significantly more at Central East Middle School than at the control school. Further HLM analyses suggest that STR implementation helps create classrooms where peer support for achievement is high, where student-teacher relations are positive, and where students are confident both in their ability to learn and in the future utility of what they are learning. An appendix contains "Teacher's Treasure Hunts" activities for the classroom. (Contains 3 tables, 2 figures, and 23 references.) (Author/SLD)

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CRESPAR

THE TALENT DEVELOPMENT MIDDLE SCHOOL

Creating a Motivational Climate Conducive to Talent Development in Middle Schools: Implementation and Effects of Student Team Reading

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CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON THE EDUCATION OF STUDENTS PLACED AT RISK

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The Center

Every child has the capacity to succeed in school and in life. Yet far too many children, especially those from poor and minority families, are placed at risk by school practices that are based on a sorting paradigm in which some students receive high-expectations instruction while the rest are relegated to lower quality education and lower quality futures. The sorting perspective must be replaced by a "talent development" model that asserts that all children are capable of succeeding in a rich and demanding curriculum with appropriate assistance and support.

The mission of the Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk (CRESPAR) is to conduct the research, development, evaluation, and dissemination needed to transform schooling for students placed at risk. The work of the Center is guided by three central themes — ensuring the success of all students at key development points, building on students' personal and cultural assets, and scaling up effective programs — and conducted through seven research and development programs and a program of institutional activities.

CRESPAR is organized as a partnership of Johns Hopkins University and Howard University, in collaboration with researchers at the University of California at Santa Barbara, the University of California at Los Angeles, University of Oklahoma, University of Chicago, Manpower Research Demonstration Corporation, WestEd Regional Laboratory, University of Memphis, and University of Houston-Clear Lake.

Abstract

Central East Middle School in Philadelphia and CRESPAR are working together to implement a Talent Development Middle School model of schooling. Part of this effort includes use of the Student Team Reading (STR) program, which changes both the instructional processes and curriculum in Reading, English, and Language Arts (RELA) to create a motivational climate that is conducive to learning and personal development. Teachers at Central East Middle School in Philadelphia were trained in STR in the summer of 1995 and received curricular materials and technical support throughout the first semester of the 1995-1996 school year. Implementation and outcome data were collected in February 1996 at Central East Middle School and a matched comparison school. Hierarchical Linear Models (HLM) analyses reveal that STR was used significantly more at Central East Middle School than at the control school. Further HLM analyses suggest that STR implementation helps create classrooms where peer support for achievement is high, where student-teacher relations are positive, where students work hard to master course content and meet adults' standards, and where students are confident both in their ability to learn and in the future utility of what they are learning.

Acknowledgments

We thank Leslie Jones and Robert Petza for their work in helping teachers at Central East Middle School learn Student Team Reading methods and use them effectively; Maria Garriott and Salimah Perkins for writing scores of Treasure Hunts for use at Central East; and especially the faculty and administrators at Central East for their courage and hard work in becoming the nation's first Talent Development Middle School.

Creating a Motivational Climate Conducive to Talent Development in Middle Schools: Implementation and Effects of Student Team Reading

Braddock & McPartland (1993) have outlined several sources of motivation that can encourage all students to work hard at learning tasks in the middle grades, and have examined the special obstacles often encountered by poor and minority students as barriers to each type of motivation. Three of these sources are: (1) a caring and supportive human environment, (2) classroom tasks that are interesting and are relevant to future goals, and (3) opportunities for academic success at challenging learning tasks.

For middle school students, one of the most potent sources of motivation is to have caring teachers and peers who are rooting for them to do well, who are encouraging them to give their best in the classroom, and who are doing everything in their power to help them improve their skills and increase their understanding. When a student perceives his or her teacher as a supportive teammate rather than as an opponent or a stranger, this is conducive to talent development because it creates a desire within the student to keep the respect of and meet the standards set by the teacher.

Unfortunately, many urban middle school students are not certain that their teachers are "on their side" or care how they feel (e.g., Mac Iver & Plank, 1996). As a result, these students are unwilling to cooperate enthusiastically with the teacher's agenda in the classroom or to accept academic coaching from the teacher (Braddock & McPartland, 1993). Further, a majority of urban middle school students report little peer support for their achievement efforts (Mac Iver & Plank, 1996) because the peer norms that develop in urban middle schools seldom extol effort and achievement (e.g., McHugh, Nettles, & Gottfredson, 1993). In fact, studies suggest that in many young adolescent peer groups, students who give their best in the classroom are put down by their fellow students for "acting white" or are labeled as "nerds," "dweebs," or "brainiacs." This lack of peer support for achievement can be a very powerful discouragement to continuing to work up to one's potential in the classroom (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Ogbu, 1985; Brown, 1989; Kinney, 1993).

Another potent source of motivation for middle school students is curriculum and instruction that relates to their current interests, connects well to future educational and occupational goals, features intrinsically interesting higher-order learning tasks, and offers leeway for social interaction, student initiative, creative expression, and active participation in the learning activity. But, in the typical urban middle school classroom, most learning tasks are not intrinsically motivating because they are neither inherently interesting nor

directly relevant to students' current interests. Similarly, students' courses are seldom instrumentally motivating because they are not obviously related to preparation for future goals and aspirations. And the classwork in urban middle schools seldom matches early adolescents' developmental needs for more autonomy, self-regulation, and positive peer interactions because it features passive learning in a teacher-controlled lecture format of instruction with little opportunity to work cooperatively with other students (Epstein & Mac Iver, 1990). In addition, minority students "seldom see models from their own cultural heritages in learning materials, which weakens the personal interest they might otherwise find in classwork" (Braddock & McPartland, 1993, p. 159).

In addition to a climate of support by teachers and peers, and schoolwork that is relevant to their current interests and future goals, middle school students need to experience regular success at challenging academic tasks in order to develop confidence in their ability. Virtually every cognitive theory of motivation suggests that changes in ability perceptions can lead to dramatic changes in effort (for a brief review, see Mac Iver, Stipek, & Daniels, 1991). Students who develop increasing confidence in their ability try harder while those who lose confidence in their ability reduce their effort. This role of ability perceptions in influencing effort, especially in the face of difficulty, has been confirmed in several empirical studies (Mac Iver, Stipek, & Daniels, 1991; Helmke, 1987; Meyer, 1987; Andrews & Debus, 1978; Diener & Dweck, 1978; Licht, Kistner, Ozkaragoz, Schapiro, & Clausen, 1985; Weiner, 1979).

Furthermore, there is considerable empirical evidence to support the proposition that any event that enhances students' self-concepts of ability in their schoolwork will also enhance their intrinsic motivation on academic tasks (e.g., Ryan, Connell, & Deci, 1985; Mac Iver, Stipek, & Daniels, 1991). Unfortunately, many poor and minority adolescents find it difficult to develop confidence in their academic ability because they experience little or no genuine academic success — instead, they encounter low grades, little recognition for their learning, teacher disrespect for their potential, an insulting, "dumbed-down" curriculum and ineffective instruction, course failures, and grade retention.

The Student Team Reading (STR) program (Stevens, 1989) changes both the instructional processes and the curriculum in middle grades Reading, English, and Language Arts (RELA) to create a conducive motivational climate that addresses each of the three sources of motivation considered above and to further students' reading comprehension and understanding of good literature. We will first describe the components of the STR program, then examine how STR helps create a conducive motivational climate.

The Student Team Reading Program

In the Student Team Reading (STR) program, reading instruction is made more meaningful because students read good literature (e.g., award-winning novels) rather than stories from a "basal." The teacher prepares the students to read the book by introducing the author and the genre, discussing relevant background information, and introducing the new vocabulary words. Then, for each section of the book, students engage in a series of cooperative learning activities which the teacher monitors. The teacher leads the students through a discussion of the daily activities as the students complete them. The activities include:

Partner reading. Students read a section of the book first silently, then orally with a partner. During oral reading, each student reads aloud while the partner follows the text and helps the reader with his/her errors. The oral reading practice is designed to build fluency and automaticity of decoding (Samuels, 1979), and the repeated reading builds both automaticity and comprehension (Anderson, et al., 1985).

Treasure Hunts. Students are given challenging, high-level questions about the book they are reading that require them to think analytically and comparatively and draw conclusions, and to analyze the plot, literary devices, and the writer's style and technique. For example, students are asked to explain the significance of the main characters and setting in relation to the story, draw conclusions about any special relationships between characters, make predictions regarding what will happen next based on solid textual evidence that they have already read, and develop interesting, unusual or thought-provoking ideas related to the book's theme. Students discuss the answers to Treasure Hunt questions with their partner, then each student writes his or her answers separately. The use of Treasure Hunts helps ensure a schoolwide focus in RELA on higher-order competencies.

Word mastery. Students practice saying the new vocabulary aloud with their partners until they are able to say them accurately and smoothly. This helps students master the new words so that they will not interfere with their comprehension of that section of the book (Perfetti, 1985). After reading the appropriate section, students write a vivid, elaborated "meaningful sentence" for each selected word from the vocabulary list. The goal is to show they understand the meaning of the word by embedding context clues in the sentence which help to create a picture in the reader's mind (e.g., "Richard was so *anxious* about the test he had to take that sweat poured down his forehead and his hands shook wildly" not "Richard was *anxious*"). Students use a metacognitive checking strategy to evaluate the meaningfulness of their sentences. They take the vocabulary word out of the sentence to see if they can substitute

other words in its place. If the word can be replaced easily by other words (excluding synonyms), the sentence is not a "meaningful" use of the vocabulary word.

Story-retelling. After reading the selection and discussing it in their teams and with the whole class, students summarize the main parts to their partners. Summarizing and paraphrasing content in one's own words has been found to improve students' comprehension of what has been read (Weinstein, 1982).

Story-related writing. After reading the selection, the students are given "Adventures in Writing" prompts that require them to respond in a brief composition to what they have just read. The writing activities allow students to elaborate upon what they have read and relate it to their prior knowledge and experiences, thus increasing their depth of comprehension (Anderson et al., 1985).

Extension activities. These activities offer a variety of cross-curriculum assignments that use writing, research, fine arts and media, dramatics, or interdisciplinary projects to explore themes and ideas from the story.

Tests. Three tests follow each section of a book: A story test assessing students' understanding of the story (students respond to a mixture of analytical and detail-oriented questions about the story's main issues), a word meaning test (students write meaningful sentences for selected vocabulary words), and a "words out loud" test (students read the Word Mastery List aloud quickly and accurately to the teacher or other adult). Students complete the tests independently and they are scored by the teacher. The test scores are used to determine team scores and team recognition.

Explicit instruction in comprehension strategies. Students receive explicit instruction in comprehension strategies such as identifying main ideas and themes, drawing conclusions, making predictions, and understanding figurative language. The instruction provides students with comprehension-fostering strategies and metacognitive checking strategies such as those developed in basic and applied research in reading comprehension (e.g., Palincsar & Brown, 1984; Paris, Lipson, & Wixon, 1983; Stevens, 1988). After teacher-directed instruction in the strategies, students engage in cooperative learning activities to master the strategies. Teachers then review and apply the strategies when relevant to later literature selections.

Student Team Reading and Motivational Climate

In Student Team Reading, as in all Student Team Learning methods (Slavin, 1990), students work in cooperative teams. Each team is made up of four to five students of different races, sexes, and levels of achievement, and each reflects the composition of the class as a whole on these attributes. The teams receive rewards and recognition based on the degree to which they can increase the academic performance of each member. The team awards give students a reason to support the achievement efforts of their peers because the team can succeed only if each team member learns. Peer support for achievement is also emphasized by the cooperative nature of the learning tasks and by the teacher, who tries to communicate an "all for one, one for all" attitude (Slavin, 1995).

During early adolescence, students' relationships with teachers need to evolve so that teachers allow students to become more self-regulating and responsible for their own learning while providing students with dependable support and external standards. Student Team Reading encourages healthy student initiative and personal judgment by making team members directly responsible for the learning of their teammates. In Student Team Reading, teachers direct students to "Ask 3 before me" — to ask their teammates for help when they have a question and involve the teacher only if the whole team is stumped. This ceding of responsibility and control to students is a very salient indicator to students that the teacher respects them and understands an early adolescent's need for autonomy and peer interaction.

In many classrooms, when a student attempts to establish a close personal relationship with the teacher, the student's peers view this behavior with suspicion. Even such seemingly innocent actions as demonstrating alertness or responsiveness in class often are interpreted by other students as strategic behavior designed to bias the instructor's grading. As a result, student norms develop that forbid "fraternizing with the teacher" and that tacitly state that it is "cool" to appear bored in class and to exhibit only grudging cooperation with the teacher's agenda. The Student Team Reading program helps weaken these student norms that interfere with close student-teacher relationships by implementing externally defined criteria for team awards that are consistent across classrooms and are not subject to teacher bias. These externally defined standards in Student Team Reading help to de-emphasize the teacher's role as a standard-setter and evaluator and instead emphasize the teacher's role as a coach and an ally.

Student Team Reading also helps make reading instruction more relevant and interesting because students read good literature (e.g., award-winning novels). Student Team Reading also features the use of literature whose authors represent a wide variety of different cultures and groups. This increases the perceived relevance and future utility of the course content compared to more traditional RELA (**R**eading, **E**nglish, and **L**anguage **A**rts) classrooms. Finally, the

challenging high-level questions that students discuss in STR, the emphasis on adding words to one's everyday working vocabulary and on authentic "Adventures in Writing" assignments and extension activities all help students to see that the knowledge and skills emphasized in RELA are valuable and likely to be useful in their lives. (All of these characteristics of STR are illustrated by the series of Treasure Hunts that accompany the novel *Circle of Gold*, contained in Appendix A.)

Effects of Student Team Reading in the Talent Development Middle School

In this report, we summarize data on the implementation of STR at Central East Middle School (and in a matched comparison school) during the first semester in which Central East Middle School began the process of becoming a Talent Development Middle School. Then, we present analyses that test whether STR implementation helped create motivationally conducive RELA classrooms where peer support for achievement is high, where student-teacher relations are positive, where students work hard to master the material and meet adults' standards, and where students are confident both in their ability to learn and in the future utility of what they are learning.

Although other components of the Talent Development Model have also begun to be implemented at Central East Middle School in other subject areas, this paper focuses solely on the implementation and immediate effects of STR in RELA classrooms.

Research Design and Analysis Methods

Research sites

The study design involves Central East Middle School as the experimental site and another Philadelphia middle school as a control site. Of the two schools, Central East was selected for the study first, being a site which faced many of the challenges typical of urban schools. After the Central East staff had the Talent Development model described to them, they voted to adopt the model and to work with CRESPAR researchers.

Subsequently, the research office of the School District of Philadelphia identified the other school as an appropriate comparison site, being the middle school in the city that was most similar to Central East in terms of the student population being served and characteristics of the teaching staff. Each school serves the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. Each enrolls

approximately 1,000 students. These students tend to come from families with fairly low socio-economic levels. Also, many of the students have learned English as their second language. At Central East, approximately 53 percent of the students spoke a language other than English before they started going to school. At the control school, the comparable number is 48 percent.

Regarding racial and ethnic composition, Central East's student body is about 45 percent Hispanic, with most of these students being of Puerto Rican descent. Another 24 percent of the students are African-American. About 13 percent of the students are of Asian descent, primarily Cambodian and Vietnamese. Another 8 percent are white. The remaining 10 percent identify themselves as belonging to other racial or ethnic groups. These other groups include Arab-Americans and biracial students.

The control school's student body is similarly diverse although, in comparison with Central East, it has a higher proportion of Hispanic students, somewhat lower proportions of African-American and white students, and very few Asian-American students. Specifically, 57 percent of the students are Hispanic; 16 percent are African-American; 15 percent are white; fewer than 1 percent are Asian-American; and the remainder describe themselves as biracial or other.

For the purposes of this paper, the treatment which differentiates the experimental site from the control site is the fact that the Central East teachers were trained in STR techniques in the summer of 1995, and have received curricular materials and technical support during the 1995-1996 school year. The Central East RELA teachers have been asked to utilize STR in their classes. Periodic classroom visits by CRESPAR observers, and the ongoing partnership between CRESPAR and Central East, have encouraged this utilization. In contrast, teachers at the control site have not received STR training from CRESPAR staff and have not been asked to utilize these methods. The reader will note in the following analyses, however, that we do not make the assumption that STR implementation is complete at the experimental site and absent at the control site. Rather, we measure implementation for each classroom and model it as, successively, both an outcome and an independent variable.

Our recognition that some practices which are consistent with STR may be used in classrooms at the control site comes from the fact that Student Team Learning techniques, which inspired Student Team Reading techniques, have been utilized at a fairly high rate in various schools in Philadelphia in the past decade. Because of the proximity of Philadelphia to Baltimore, where both Student Team Learning and STR originate, and because numerous staff development training sessions have been conducted in Philadelphia over the years, it is probable that some teachers from the control site would have been exposed to these methods at some point in their careers. Furthermore, some of the techniques used in STR are practices that any well-trained English teacher might use.

Despite these reasons why classrooms at the control site might exhibit some level of STR implementation as we have measured it, we initiated our data collection and analyses with the expectation that implementation would be markedly greater at the experimental site. It is there, after all, that an explicit effort is being made to have teachers use the techniques. As will be seen in the following analyses, our expectation was realized.

Data collection

Our data come from a survey conducted in both schools in February of 1996. This questionnaire was administered to students in all four grades, as well as in ungraded special education classes. The focus of the survey was the student's experiences in, and attitudes about, his or her RELA class. Every student at the two schools is enrolled in RELA. In the majority of cases, the surveys were administered in the RELA classroom, with both the teacher and a CRESPAR researcher present. In other cases, due to scheduling constraints, surveys were administered in non-RELA classes, but with the instructions that students should answer the questions with reference to RELA.

A total of 1776 students from 72 RELA classrooms were surveyed. Of these, 918 students were from 34 RELA classes at Central East. The other 858 were from 38 RELA classes at the control school. In asking about the student's experiences in, and attitudes about, his or her RELA class, the survey focused on issues of peer support for achievement, relations with the teacher, self-perceptions of ability, interest in the subject matter, motivation to learn, and effort put toward learning. Also, the student was asked to report the frequency with which he or she had experienced a set of learning activities which are parts of Student Team Reading (STR). Finally, other items on the questionnaire, which are not used in the present analyses, asked about the student's long-term educational and occupational expectations, preparation for high school, and career exploration.

Measures

The specific measures used in our analyses can be subdivided into measures of STR implementation and attitudinal measures. Both groups of measures are described in Table 1. As the table shows, STR implementation is measured by a composite variable which is based on the student's responses to nine individual items. Students were asked how often each of the nine learning activities happened in RELA class. Responses were coded in terms of days per month. Z-scores were then calculated for each of the nine items. The composite measure, STR, is the mean of each student's Z-scores for the nine items. A factor analysis of the nine items was conducted to confirm that the items jointly measure a single underlying construct. Throughout this report, we use a classroom's mean on this composite as our measure of STR implementation in that classroom.

Table 1

Composites Used to Measure Students' Perceptions

STR: Frequency of Student Team Reading Implementation (α = .81)
(Every item on this composite had the same response options: *never, once or twice a month, once or twice a week, most days, every day*)
Students read a part of a novel silently and then read the same part aloud with a partner.
Students discussed a novel with a partner.
Students worked in teams to master the vocabulary used in a novel.
Students wrote a brief composition related to the topic or theme of a novel.
After reading part of a novel, students made predictions about what might happen in the rest of the story.
Students composed meaningful sentences using vocabulary words from a novel.
Teams of students could earn certificates or other rewards if they showed good progress.
Students explained answers to their teammates and checked to make sure that all their teammates understood the material.
Students took turns with partners asking questions, and answering the questions the partners asked.

PEER SUPPORT: Peer Support for Achievement (α = .71)	
My classmates want me to be a good student.	(*definitely false, mostly false, mostly true, definitely true*)
My classmates want to help me to do my best work.	(*definitely false, mostly false, mostly true, definitely true*)
My classmates believe it is important to come to school every day.	(*definitely false, mostly false, mostly true, definitely true*)
When I work in this class, it is because it is important to my classmates that I do well.	(*not at all a reason, a very important reason*)
If I don't do my best in this class, my classmates will be mad at me.	(*definitely false, mostly false, mostly true, definitely true*)

TCHR CARES: My Teacher Cares (α = .77)	
My teacher cares about how we feel.	(*almost never, almost always*)
I feel that my teacher is rooting for me to do well.	(*almost never, almost always*)
I feel that my teacher is "on my side."	(*almost never, almost always*)
My teacher does everything she or he can to help us improve our skills and increase our understanding.	(*almost never, almost always*)
My teacher and I are like...	(*opponents or strangers, teammates*)

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Table 1 (continued)

WORK FOR ADULTS: I Work to Meet Adults' Standards (α = .66)	
When I work in this class, it is because it is important to my parents that I do well.	*(not at all a reason, a very important reason)*
When I work in this class, it is because it is important to my teacher that I do well.	*(not at all a reason, a very important reason)*
When I work in this class, it is because I want a good grade.	*(not at all a reason, a very important reason)*

FUTURE UTILITY: Utility Value of RELA For My Future (α = .76)	
When I work in this class, it is because it helps prepare me for a career.	*(not at all a reason, a very important reason)*
When I work in this class, it is because the knowledge and skills are useful in my life.	*(not at all a reason, a very important reason)*
When I work in this class, it is because it helps prepare me for high school.	*(not at all a reason, a very important reason)*
How useful will what you learn in this class be for future classes you might take?	*(not at all a reason, a very important reason)*

EFFORT (α = .80)	
How hard are you working to learn about this subject?	*(not hard at all, as hard as I can)*
How hard do you study for tests in this class?	*(just enough to pass, whatever it takes to get a good grade)*
How hard do you work in this class?	*(much less than most classes, much more than most classes)*
How much do you care about learning a lot in this class?	*(don't care at all, care very much)*
If a student works to his or her highest potential in a class, then we would say that he or she is putting forth 100% effort to learn the subject matter. How much effort do you usually put forth in this class?	*(0% — I'm not trying at all, 100% — I'm working to my highest potential)*

SCA: Self-Concept of Ability (α = .85)	
How good do you think you are in this subject compared to other students in your school?	*(much worse than other students, much better than other students)*
How good are you in this subject?	*(not good at all, very good)*
How often do you feel smart in this class?	*(never, very often)*
How much natural ability do you have in this subject?	*(no ability at all, a lot of ability)*
How much have your skills in this class improved this year?	*(my skills have not improved at all, my skills have improved a lot)*

Table 1 (continued)

GIVE MY BEST: I try to "give my best" in RELA (α = .78)	
Showing improvement in this class is important to me.	*(strongly disagree, strongly agree)*
Doing the best I can in this class is important to me.	*(strongly disagree, strongly agree)*
When my teacher returns exams in this class, I like to see if my work has improved.	*(not very true of me, very true of me)*
I try to do the best I can in this class.	*(not much of the time, all of the time)*
How upset would you be if you were not doing as well in this class as you thought you could do?	*(not at all upset, very upset)*

INTRINSIC: Intrinsic Value of RELA (α = .79)	
How much do you like working on the assignments in this class?	*(not at all, very much)*
How much do you enjoy the work you do in this class?	*(not much at all, very much)*
How often do you get to work on exciting stuff in this class?	*(not much at all, very much)*
When I work in this class it is because I'm really interested in the subject matter.	*(not at all a reason, a very important reason)*
How often do you feel bored in this class?	*(never, very often)* **reverse coded**

ANTI-ACADEMIC: Anti-Academic Norms (α = .47)	
My classmates make fun of students who ask questions in this class.	*(definitely false, mostly false, mostly true, definitely true)*
My classmates don't think it is important to pay attention to the teacher in this class.	*(definitely false, mostly false, mostly true, definitely true)*
My friends would make fun of me if I did too well in this class.	*(definitely false, mostly false, mostly true, definitely true)*
My classmates do not care whether I work hard or not in this class.	*(definitely false, mostly false, mostly true, definitely true)*
Sometimes I don't do as well in this class as I could so that I will fit in better with my friends.	*(definitely false, mostly false, mostly true, definitely true)*

TCHR DISRESPECT: Teacher Shows Disrespect for Students (α =.56)	
My teacher thinks that some of the students in this class can't do very good work.	(Every item on this composite had a response scale with the same verbal anchors: *almost never, almost always)*
My teacher treats some students better than other students.	
The work in this class is just busy work and a waste of time.	

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The ten composite variables described in Table 1 are calculated to capture students' attitudes toward RELA. These ten constructs have been used in previous research (e.g., Mac Iver, Stipek, & Daniels, 1991; Mac Iver, 1993; Mac Iver & Reuman, 1993) and the questionnaire was designed with the intention of measuring them. As with the implementation items, a factor analysis was conducted to confirm that individual items clustered in the combinations we had anticipated. Using a ten-factor solution of forty-eight individual items as a guide in constructing ten meaningful composites, we calculated the following composite variables:

Peer Support for Achievement (PEER SUPPORT)

My Teacher Cares (TCHR CARES)

I Work to Meet Adults' Standards (WORK FOR ADULTS)

Utility Value of RELA for my Future (FUTURE UTILITY)

Effort (EFFORT)

Self-Concept of Ability (SCA)

I Try to "Give My Best" in RELA (GIVE MY BEST)

Intrinsic Value of RELA (INTRINSIC)

Anti-Academic Norms (ANTI-ACADEMIC)

Teacher Shows Disrespect for Students (TCHR DISRESPECT)

Analysis plan

Broadly, our analysis plan was (1) to examine STR implementation as an outcome, comparing the experimental and control sites, and (2) to examine the attitudinal measures as outcomes that might be affected by STR implementation. In each case, we relied on hierarchical linear models (HLM) as a method by which we could do the appropriate disaggregating of within- and between-classroom variation.

In analyzing implementation at level one, we modeled the composite measure, STR, as a function of an unadjusted classroom mean (the intercept) and random variation at the student level. At level two, we modeled the unadjusted classroom mean as a function of an intercept, school (experimental versus control), and random variation at the classroom level. Similarly, each of the nine individual items of which STR is composed were modeled in this way. With these estimated models, we can assess the mean levels of student-reported implementation at each school, as well as the within- and between-classroom variation in the student reports.

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In analyzing the attitudinal measures as outcomes, we modeled each of the ten attitudinal composites with the following functional form, unless a more parsimonious model described the data equally well:

$$Y_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j}(\text{FEMALE}_{ij}) + \beta_{2j}(\text{WHITE}_{ij}) + r_{ij}$$

(1) $$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}(\text{STR})_j + \gamma_{02}(\text{SCHOOL})_j + \gamma_{03}(\text{SEVENTH})_j + \gamma_{04}(\text{SIXTH})_j + \gamma_{05}(\text{FIFTH})_j + \gamma_{06}(\text{UNGRADED})_j + u_{0j}$$

$$\beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10} + u_{1j}$$

$$\beta_{2j} = \gamma_{20} + u_{2j}$$

where all predictors are grand mean-centered and the usual assumptions are made about error terms (Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992)

The model above specifies the dependent variable as a function of an adjusted classroom mean (the intercept), race (white versus nonwhite), gender (represented by a dummy variable for female), and a random error term at the student level.[1] However, race and gender were retained in our final hierarchical linear models only if they were significant predictors. When they were retained, a data-guided decision was made regarding whether to treat them as fixed or random effects.

The classroom-level model specifies the classroom mean of the dependent variable, adjusted for racial and gender composition of the class, as a function of an intercept, STR implementation, school (represented by a dummy variable for the experimental site), grade (represented as a series of dummy variables with eighth grade as the excluded reference category), and a random error term. The dummy variables for grade were retained only if an omnibus test suggested that they were significant as a block. The slopes for FEMALE and WHITE are not modeled as functions of any classroom-level variables but, rather, each is modeled simply as a function of a grand mean and either a random or fixed error term, as is mentioned above. With these estimated models for the ten attitudinal outcomes, we can

[1] The decision to limit our investigation of race effects to white versus nonwhite at this point was guided by findings from some preliminary OLS regression models. Additionally, we selected one of the attitudinal outcomes — PEER SUPPORT — for a more detailed investigation of race and ethnicity within the HLM framework. Dummy variables for white, Asian-American, African-American, and other were included as student-level predictors, with Hispanic as the excluded reference category. Only the coefficient for white was significantly different from zero. This added to our evidence that the white-nonwhite dichotomy is the important racial and ethnic distinction in modeling these outcomes for our sample.

assess the relationship between STR implementation and this important set of attitudinal measures.

Results

School as a predictor of between-classroom differences in STR implementation

As indicated earlier, we use a classroom's mean on the STR composite as our measure of STR implementation in that classroom. Thus, our HLM analysis uses SCHOOL as a predictor of the classroom mean on this composite in our level two model to test whether there was higher implementation of STR in RELA classrooms at Central East Middle School than in the RELA classrooms of the control school. This analysis indicated that overall STR implementation at Central East Middle School was .68 standard deviations higher than at the comparison school (*gamma* = .19, p = .006).

Figure 1
STR Implementation in Experimental & Control Classrooms

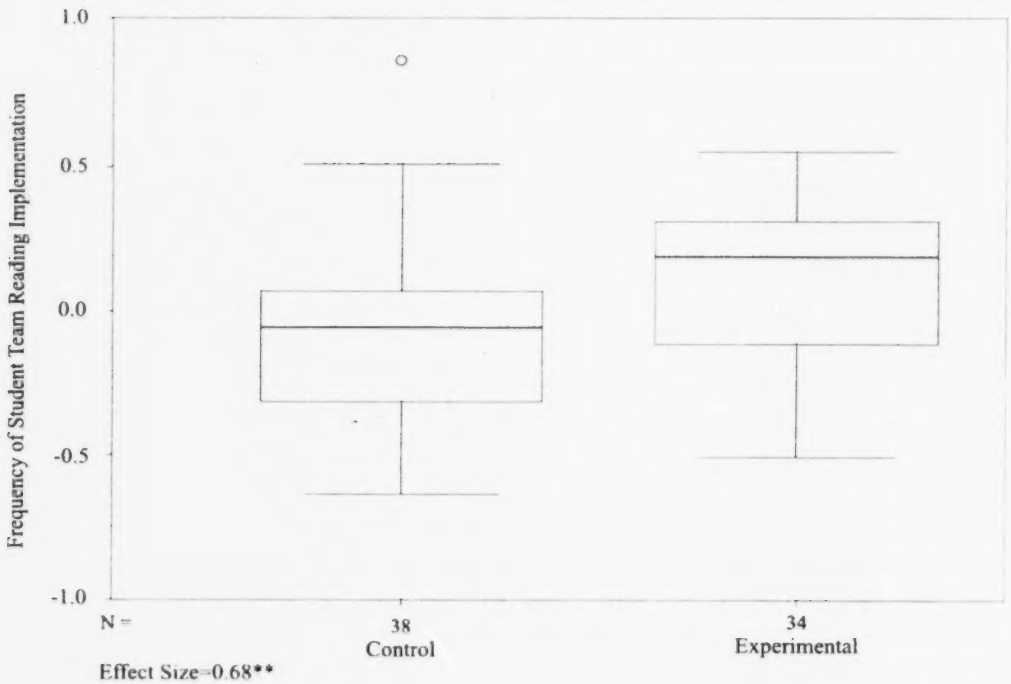

Figure 1 is a box plot showing the observed STR implementation in the 38 control school classrooms and 34 experimental classrooms. This plot shows graphically the greater use of STR at Central East Middle School. It also shows that, as expected, some teachers use STR at the comparison school, including one "outlier" teacher who uses STR more frequently than any other teacher in either school.

Table 2
Frequency of Implementation of Student Team Reading Components:
Mean Days per Month

Component	Control	Experimental	Effect Size
Compose meaningful sentences w/vocabulary	8.31	11.28	*** 1.10
Write a brief composition related to novel	6.06	7.83	*** 0.84
Work with team to master vocabulary	7.06	9.22	*** 0.75
Discuss novel with partner	6.72	7.96	** 0.64
Explain answers to team & make sure all understand	8.81	10.29	*0.57
Make predictions about "the rest of the story"	9.40	10.53	*0.56
Take turns w/partner asking & answering questions	7.91	9.15	0.49
Read silently, then read aloud with partner	6.90	7.57	0.27
Team awards for progress	7.50	6.27	-0.37

Table 2 displays the mean differences among experimental and control classrooms on each of the nine items that were included in the STR composite. Our HLM analyses indicate that SCHOOL is a significant predictor of a classroom's mean on six of these nine items: Students in the experimental school experienced more frequent opportunities to compose meaningful sentences using vocabulary words from the novel they were reading, do story-related writing, work in teams to master the vocabulary used in a novel, discuss a novel with a partner, explain answers to their teammates and check to make sure that all their teammates understood the material, and to make predictions about what might happen in the rest of the story. In contrast, SCHOOL was not a significant predictor of using team awards for progress, partner reading, or partner questioning.

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STR implementation as a predictor of between-classroom differences in ten attitudinal outcomes

Table 3 shows our final estimated hierarchical linear models for each of the ten attitudinal outcomes. Each of these models has a fixed effects component and a variance component. The exact combination of fixed effects and error terms retained for each dependent variable was determined empirically, as we sought parsimonious versions of the model presented in Equation 1.

Table 3
HLM Estimated Effects for Ten Attitudinal Measures

	PEER SUPPORT	**TCHR CARES**	**WORK FOR ADULTS**	**FUTURE UTILITY**	**EFFORT**
Fixed effects	*Coefficient*	*Coefficient*	*Coefficient*	*Coefficient*	*Coefficient*
For classroom means					
INTERCEPT	0.02	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.04
STR	*** 0.57	*** 0.55	** 0.28	* 0.22	*** 0.29
SCHOOL	*** -0.21	-0.09	0.00	-0.07	-0.10
SEVENTH					0.07
SIXTH					** 0.24
FIFTH					*** 0.34
UNGRADED					*** 0.43
For Female slope					
INTERCEPT		** 0.12	** 0.09	*** 0.17	*** 0.20
For White slope					
INTERCEPT	*** -0.16		* -0.19		
Random effects	*Variance component*	*Variance component*	*Variance component*	*Variance component*	*Variance component*
Classroom mean	*** 0.05	*** 0.06	*** 0.02	*** 0.02	*** 0.02
Female slope		** 0.05	*fixed as zero*	*fixed as zero*	*fixed as zero*
White slope	*fixed as zero*		*** 0.15		
Level-1 effect	0.39	0.42	0.54	0.55	0.49

Table 3
HLM Estimated Effects for Ten Attitudinal Measures
(continued)

	SCA	GIVE MY BEST	INTRINSIC	ANTI-ACADEMIC	TCHR DISRESPECT
Fixed effects	*Coefficient*	*Coefficient*	*Coefficient*	*Coefficient*	*Coefficient*
For classroom means					
INTERCEPT	0.01	0.00	0.04	0.05	0.05
STR	* 0.23	* 0.21	0.22	0.01	0.00
SCHOOL	-0.08	-0.04	*** -0.24	* 0.12	0.02
SEVENTH		0.09	* 0.19	0.06	-0.02
SIXTH		** 0.22	*** 0.42	0.04	-0.04
FIFTH		* 0.24	*** 0.52	0.00	0.07
UNGRADED		0.11	*** 0.52	*** 0.40	*** 0.42
For Female slope					
INTERCEPT	** 0.12	*** 0.19	*** 0.16	** -0.07	*** -0.13
For White slope					
INTERCEPT			* -0.14		*** -0.18
Random effects	*Variance component*	*Variance component*	*Variance component*	*Variance component*	*Variance component*
Classroom mean	*** 0.04	*** 0.02	*** 0.05	*** 0.03	*** 0.06
Female slope	*fixed as zero*	*fixed as zero*	* 0.02	*fixed as zero*	*fixed as zero*
White slope			* 0.06		*fixed as zero*
Level-1 effect	0.58	0.48	0.42	0.29	0.44

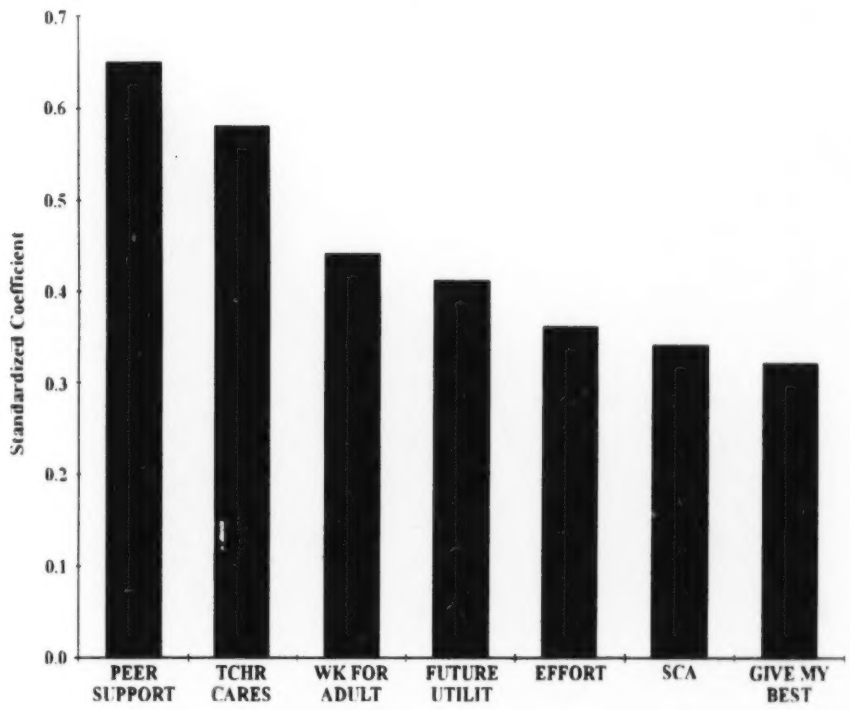
*** $p < 0.001$ ** $p < 0.01$ * $p < 0.05$

In each model, the estimated effect of greatest interest to us substantively is the fixed effect of STR. The results in Table 3 show that STR use in the classroom has significant effects on seven of the ten dependent variables. The size of these significant effects can be gauged by transforming each unstandardized coefficient from Table 3 into a standardized regression coefficient that indicates the proportion of a standard deviation that a student's

outcome score is predicted to rise given a one standard deviation increase in a teacher's use of Student Team Reading.

Figure 2 shows that these significant effects range in size from about one-third of a standard deviation to about two-thirds of a standard deviation. The largest effects are those on PEER SUPPORT ($\gamma^* = .65$), TCHR CARES ($\gamma^* = .58$), WORK FOR ADULTS ($\gamma^* = .44$), FUTURE UTILITY ($\gamma^* = .41$), and EFFORT ($\gamma^* = .36$). In contrast, a teacher's use of Student Team Reading is not a significant predictor of students' outcomes on three of our dependent variables: INTRINSIC ($\gamma^* = .21$), ANTI-ACADEMIC ($\gamma^* = .01$), and TCHR DISRESPECT ($\gamma^* = .00$).

Figure 2
Impact of STR Use on Outcomes



Discussion

The cross-sectional analyses reported here suggest that even after only one semester of use at Central East Middle School, STR implementation is a strong predictor of differences between classrooms on seven important measures of student motivation and motivational climate. For example, the relationship between STR implementation and peer support for achievement

— $\gamma^* = .65$ — is as strong as the relationship between sixth-grade students' math computation and math concepts and applications scales scores on the CTBS/4 (Mac Iver & Plank, 1995). Similarly, the relationship between STR implementation and our measure of teacher caring — $\gamma^* = .58$ — is as strong as the relationship between sixth-grade students' reading vocabulary and reading comprehension scale scores on the CTBS/4 (Mac Iver & Plank, 1995). The results suggest that the use of STR makes a significant difference in helping Central East Middle School create ideal classroom conditions for developing the academic talents of middle school students.

The motivational measures we have studied are important outcomes in themselves, but we also expect them to operate as intermediate variables in a more general model affecting more distal outcomes. According to this model, classroom practices and school organization affect motivation, attitudes, effort, and social relations. In turn, these variables affect students' future course-taking, persistence in schooling, academic achievement, job placement and/or career choice, and more. As further elements and components of the Talent Development Middle School are implemented, we will elaborate upon and evaluate this model more fully.

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APPENDIX A

TEACHERS' TREASURE HUNTS

Circle of Gold

by Candy Dawson Boyd

Teacher's Edition

STORY SUMMARY

In *Circle of Gold*, Mattie Benson is the young teenage girl who struggles to pull her family back together after the tragic death of her father. Mattie, who lives in urban Chicago, fears that her family "isn't a family anymore"; her grieving mother has removed all photos of the late Mr. Benson from the apartment, and is working two jobs to try to make ends meet financially. When Mrs. Benson is home, she is exhausted and short tempered.

Mattie decides to buy her mother an expensive pearl and gold circle pin for Mother's Day, but is daunted by the expense. She makes a deposit on the pin, and puts it on layaway. For the next few weeks, Mattie applies her savings and baby-sitting money toward the cost of the pin, but still comes up short.

In desperation, she enters a Mother's Day essay contest sponsored by the local newspaper. Because Mattie feels unsure of her writing skills, she persuades her best friend Toni to write an essay for her. Toni reluctantly agrees. On the last day of the contest, Mattie stands in front of the mailbox with two entries: her original composition, and Toni's essay. She makes her choice, and the reader later learns that Mattie has mailed her own essay.

When Mattie returns to the department store to ask for more time to pay for the pin, she learns that her time has run out and the pin has been sold.

Mattie receives a letter informing her that she has won the contest, and instructing her to bring her mother and a friend to the newspaper office to claim her prize and have her picture taken. Her mother is presented with the gold pin, which the newspaper editor had purchased after reading Mattie's essay.

The story also contains a subplot about Mattie's relationship with an abusive girl at school, who is incongruously named Angel. Angel demands that Mattie share her test answers with her, and when Mattie refuses, Angel pushes her down the stairs at school. When Angel's expensive bracelet is stolen at school, she accuses Mattie. Toni goes undercover to befriend Angel and her sidekick Charlene, and learns that Charlene has stolen the missing bracelet.

Other significant characters are Mrs. Stamps, Mattie's neighbor/confidant/advisor/friend, and Mattie's twin brother, Matt.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Candy Dawson Boyd was born in Chicago in 1946. As a high school student, Boyd became active in the civil rights movement. She continued to remain politically active in college, and eventually quit school to work for Dr. Martin Luther King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference. After the violent deaths of Medgar Evers, the Kennedys, and Dr. King, Boyd was emotionally devastated and left the movement. She returned to college, earned a degree in education, and worked as an elementary teacher in Chicago for several years. Boyd describes

herself as a "militant teacher" who took her inner city children to museums and plays to expose them to the wider culture.

Boyd was disturbed about the lack of good multicultural reading material for her students. "I got absolutely enraged when I went out and I looked at the atrocity of the books out there. I wanted material, good books, strong books, books that had very interesting characters and ordinary stories. But I never saw children of color in realistic fiction depicted as children whose culture, embedded within them as a part of who they were, came out in ways that were ordinary and regular. That enraged me and I decided to become a writer."

Boyd spent two years reading all the books for children in the Berkeley Public Library and took courses on writing for children. For nine years, publishers rejected her stories, but finally *Circle of Gold* was accepted for publication. *Circle of Gold* was named a notable children's trade book in the field of social studies by the National Council for the Social Studies and the Children's Book Council in 1984, and a Coretta Scott King Award Honor Book by the American Library Association in 1985.

Boyd, whose own childhood had been enriched by family stories of the strength and courage of her ancestors, fills her books with similar positive messages. "You make it. It's going to be hard and tough and it's not fair, but you make it," she says. Her novels have young protagonists who are determined to overcome the obstacles they and their families face. About her characters, Boyd says, "I refuse to have losers as characters. I hate the words "coping" and "adjusting." In my families there is always a possibility of renewal."

Boyd channels her energy and idealism into the lives of children, both through her teaching and her writing. "I still have hope. I have a lot invested in the children. Not much of my hope lies with adults. If books help children, or give them a safe place to go, then that's the biggest reward for writing."

Other books by Candy Dawson Boyd:
Breadsticks and Blessing Places (1985)
Charlie Pippin (1987)
Chevrolet Saturday (1992)

BUILDING BACKGROUND

Circle of Gold presents many themes which will resonate with teens: dealing with family problems and interpersonal conflicts; friendship; making moral choices; peer pressure (in Mattie's case, to bend to Angel's wishes and give her test answers); and dealing with grief and loss. The story's urban setting and themes will resonate with inner city students. While Mattie's fear of encountering violence at school and her mother's struggle to hold the family together financially are not issues confined to urban dwellers, they provide plausibility and verisimilitude for urban readers. The story also touches on themes of civil rights and nonviolent resistance, as embraced by Dr. Martin Luther King.

Mattie's relationship with Mrs. Stamps is an important model for students. Mrs. Stamps helps provide emotional support and nurturing for Mattie when her mother is unable to provide for her children emotionally. Students may wish to discuss or write about a significant adult --either an extended family member or a nonrelative-- whom they respect and turn to in times of need.

PREVIEW/PREDICT/PURPOSE

Preview the story with students. Ask the students to think about the title of the book and look at the cover illustration. What is the circle of gold? Who are the main characters? Where is the story set? Have students read a few pages and **predict** what might happen. Will Mattie succeed in doing something to pull her family back together? How will she deal with her problems with Angel and Charlene at school? Will she be able to buy the gold pin for her mother? Help students set a **purpose** for reading: "I am going to read to find out how Mattie deals with her family problems;" "I am going to read to learn what Mattie does about Angel and Charlene;" "I am going to read to find out if Mattie's relationship with her mother improves."

Circle of Gold

by Candy Dawson Boyd

WORD MASTERY
VOCABULARY

adjusted 1
ample 3
anticipation 1
aroma 2
bouquets 2
brewed 2
brooding 3
caftan 2
cashmere 3
conviction 1
cowered 5
cringe 4
crystal 5
Dar-Es-Salaam 4
dismal 2
dole 1
edgy 3
efficiently 5
emphatically 4
enraptured 2
exhilarated 2
expertly 2
fiercely 1
filigree 2
flounce 4
forged 3
fragile 5
fumed 5
genuinely 3
ghouls 1
gingko 1
glower 3
inquired 5
jolted 1
lacquer 2
lamely 2
lavender 1
mauve 1
merchandise 2
mingled 2
morale 5
mournfully 4
mused 4
ointment 3
ornate 2
page-boy 1
preceded 2
psychologist 5
relented 4
reprimand 5
ruefully 1
sashayed 5
sauntered 3
scheme 3
sentiments 4
sentries 1
shrill 4
slumped 5
slyly 5
sniped 3
soothed 4
stalked 3
stout 2
taunted 3
triumph 4
urgently 3
viciously 5
vigorously 4
warily 4

Circle of Gold

by Candy Dawson Boyd

TREASURE HUNT # 1
Teacher's Edition
Chapters 1, 2 & 3

WORD MASTERY LIST

sentries	* jolted	* anticipation
lavender	gingko	* fiercely
* adjusted	page-boy	ghouls
mauve	* ruefully	* conviction
dole		

TREASURE HUNT

Section I. Stop at the end of chapter one. Discuss the answers to the questions with your partner. Then write your answers, while your partner answers separately.

1. How has Mattie's life changed since her daddy died? Since her father died in an accident, Mattie has had to work more around the apartment. Her mother must manage the apartment building alone, and is also working overtime at her factory job to try and make ends meet financially. Her mother is tired, sad, angry or tense much of the time.
2. How did Mattie's father die? Mattie's father was hit by a drunk driver.
3. Describe Mattie's relationship with her father. Mattie was closer to her father than to her mother. He used to kiss her and call her his princess.
4. Why is Angel angry at Mattie? Angel is angry at Mattie because Mattie won't let her cheat and copy the answers from her math test.
5. Why is Mattie angry at "the bunch of dopes" who hang around Angel? Mattie is angry at the girls who hang around Angel because they wish their eyes were lighter and that they had long, wavy hair like white girls'. These girls don't realize they are "lovely and special" and want to be like someone else.
6. Why is Mattie scared? Mattie is scared because Angel sent her a threatening note.

Prediction: What will Angel do to get back at Mattie? Will Mattie fight back?

Section II. Read chapters two and three. Stop at the end of chapter three. Discuss the answers to the questions with your partner. Then write your answers separately.

1. Why is the park with the gingko tree special to Mattie? The park with the gingko tree is special to Mattie because her father had taken her there on a walk to answer her questions about civil rights and Dr. Martin Luther King. The gingko tree, which has fan-shaped leaves, was their special fan tree.

2. How does Angel get back at Mattie? To get back at Mattie, Angel pushes her down the stairs when her arms are full of books. Mattie catches herself and is not seriously hurt, but her books go flying.

3. Why does Mattie lie to Mrs. Rausch? What does she say? Mattie is afraid that her Mama will lose her job superintending the apartment, so she lies to Mrs. Rausch. She tells her that her mother is out getting parts for the stove and asthma medicine for her brother.

4. Why does Mattie like to babysit at the Bacons' house? Mattie likes to babysit at the Bacon's house because she likes the two little Bacon girls, and she and her Mama need the money. She especially appreciates Mr. Bacon, who is kind and fatherly, and reminds her of her own dead father. Mattie enjoys being around this happy family, and feels accepted and appreciated by them.

5. Why doesn't Mattie tell Matt what happened with Angel and Charlene? Mattie doesn't tell her brother about being pushed down the stairs by Angel and Charlene because she doesn't want him to do something about it and get in trouble in school.

6. How is Matt's relationship with Mama different from Mattie's? Mama gets angry at Mattie more often. Matt is the peacemaker who often calms his mother down and tries to make her laugh. He tries to keep Mama from getting angry at Mattie.

7. Why is Mama mad about the extra money Mattie received from the Bacons? Mama is angry because she thinks the Bacons feel sorry for Mattie because her father died. She doesn't want to receive charity.

NOTEWORTHY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What would help Mattie's family deal with their grief?

2. Do you think Mattie's mother likes Matt better? Why or why not?

3. Should Mattie have pushed Angel back? Why or why not?

4. Would Mattie's father have wanted her to physically fight Angel? How do you know this?

5. How do Mattie and Matt express their grief? What artistic abilities do they have to use to express what they are feeling?

STORY RETELL

1. When and where does this story take place? The story takes place in a large American city (we learn it is Chicago in chapter four) during modern times.

2. Why are Mattie and Matt concerned about their mother working late? Matt and Mattie are concerned because their mother is working too hard and hardly eats or sleeps. She doesn't clean the house, is very tense, and never laughs anymore. They are also concerned that she might lose her job as building superintendent, since she is too busy to keep up with those responsibilities.

3. How did Mattie's father die, and how has it affected the family? Mattie's father was killed by a drunk driver. The family is devastated: they miss him very much, are sad, and are struggling financially. Mrs. Benson is under a great deal of stress as she tries to take care of the family.

4. Describe Mattie's best friend, Toni. How are she and Mattie alike? Different? Toni is friendly, outgoing, cheerful, and loyal. She writes well but has trouble with math. Mattie is eleven years old, quieter and more serious than Toni. She doesn't write as well as Toni but does

very well in math. Mattie is skinny, but Toni is more rounded. They have been best friends for many years and enjoy being together.

5. Who is Matt? Describe him. Matt is Mattie's twin brother. He likes to draw and paint, and is the family peacemaker.

6. What does Mattie hide under the bed? Why does she have to hide it? Mattie hides a photo of her father and the family under the bed. She has to hide it because her mother has taken down all the photos of Mr. Benson.

7. Why is Angel angry at Mattie, and what does she do? Angel is angry because Mattie did not let her cheat off her math test. Angel pushes Mattie down the stairs at school.

ADVENTURES IN WRITING

1. Toni likes to write. Write a poem or essay that she might write about her friend's grief.

2. What would have happened if Mattie had punched Angel? Write a new ending to that chapter.

3. Mattie wants things to be different in her family. Write a letter she might send to her mother for Mother's Day to express all that she is thankful for, and what she would like to change.

EXTENSION IDEAS

1. When a parent dies, the family has to deal with many problems. Make a list of the issues that Mattie and her family must deal with. Make a list of possible solutions to their problems.

2. Many schools and religious organizations try to help their members cope during difficult times, such as after the death of a family member. Talk to a guidance counselor, minister, rabbi, or other leader about ways they help families in crisis. What would they do to help Mattie?

3. Find a poem about grief or death and read it to the class. Two possibilities are Emily Dickinson's "I Heard A Fly Buzz When I Died," or "I Felt a Funeral in My Brain."

4. Matt is an artist. Draw or paint a picture of Matt, or a picture he might paint to express his grief over his dad's death.

STORY TEST

1. Since their father died, Mattie and Matt have been concerned about their mother. Why? They are concerned because their mother is working too hard and hardly eats or sleeps. She doesn't clean the house, is very tense and irritable, and never laughs anymore. They are also concerned that she might lose her job as building superintendent, since she is too busy to keep up with those responsibilities.

2. Why does Mattie like to babysit at the Bacons' house? Mattie likes to babysit at the Bacon's house because she likes the two little Bacon girls, and she and her Mama need the money. She especially appreciates Mr. Bacon, who is kind and fatherly, and reminds her of her own dead father. Mattie enjoys being around this happy family, and feeling accepted and appreciated by them.

3. Why is Angel angry at Mattie, and what does she do? Angel is angry because Mattie did not let her cheat off her math test. Angel pushes Mattie down the stairs at school.

4. How are Mattie and her best friend Toni alike? How are they different? Answers will vary, but should include several of the following points. Toni is friendly, outgoing, cheerful, and loyal. She writes well but has trouble with math. Mattie is eleven years old, quieter and more serious than Toni. She doesn't write as well as Toni but does very well in math. Mattie is skinny, but Toni is more rounded. They have been best friends for many years, and enjoy being together.

5. Why is the park with the gingko tree special to Mattie? The park with the gingko tree is special to Mattie because her father had taken her on a special walk there to answer her questions about civil rights and Dr. Martin Luther King. The gingko tree, which has fan-shaped leaves, was their special fan tree.

Circle of Gold

by Candy Dawson Boyd

TREASURE HUNT # 2
Teacher's Guide
Chapters 4, 5 & 6

WORD MASTERY LIST

* preceded	brewed	* mingled
* aroma	bouquets	enraptured
expertly	* dismal	caftan
lamely	* exhilarated	merchandise
filigree	stout	* ornate
lacquer		

TREASURE HUNT

Section I. Stop at the end of chapter four. Discuss the answers to the questions with your partner. Then write your answers, while your partner answers separately.

1. Why do Mattie and Matt think they're not a family anymore? Matt and Mattie think they're not a family because their mother won't celebrate Mother's Day. Because her mother doesn't kiss her or speak kindly to her, Mattie thinks her mother doesn't love or need her anymore.
2. Why doesn't Mattie want to throw away her red shirt? Mattie doesn't want to throw away her red shirt because it was a gift from her father.
3. What is Toni giving to her mother for Mother's Day? Toni is going to make a shawl for her mother using lavender and silver yarn.
4. Describe Stern's department store. Stern's is an expensive department store located in downtown Chicago. The merchandise is more expensive, but is of better quality than the stores in Mattie's neighborhood.
5. Why does Mattie count black customers? Mattie counts black customers because she wants to make sure there are other black people in the store, and that African-American shoppers are welcome.

Prediction: Will Mattie get enough money to buy the pin? Will her mother like it?
Section II. Read chapters five and six. Stop at the end of chapter six. Discuss the answers to the questions with your partner, then write your answers separately.

1. Describe Mrs. Stamps. Why do the girls enjoy visiting her? Mrs. Stamps is a good listener, very sympathetic, caring, and interested in the girls. She often invites Mattie and Toni up to her apartment for tea and cake. She wears big jewelry and an orange caftan.
2. How does Toni suggest that Mattie earn money? Toni suggests that Mattie enter the newspaper's essay contest and try to win the fifty dollar prize.

3. What happens when Mattie is late? When Mattie is late, her mother yells at her and slaps her cheek. Mattie has never been hit by either of her parents before.
4. Who is Mrs. Grover and how does she treat the girls? Mrs. Grover is the black saleslady at Stern's Department Store. She is very firm and tells Mattie she must deposit twenty dollars to put the pin on layaway, but she also bends the rules and puts the pin aside until Mattie returns with the money.
5. What does Mrs. Stamps say when Mattie tells her that her Mama hit her? Mrs. Stamps is very sympathetic to Mattie, but says her mother is not herself lately. She thinks Mattie's mother is under too much pressure and should talk to a pastor or counselor.
6. What is Charlene doing when Mattie sees her? Why does she refuse help? Charlene is trying to carry three large pillowcases full of laundry to the laundromat, and has dropped them on the sidewalk. Mattie offers to help her, but Charlene refuses. Charlene feels humiliated because her family is so poor and she has to struggle so much. She may also be ashamed of how she and Angel treat Mattie.

NOTEWORTHY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Is it important or helpful for young people to have older friends like Mrs. Stamps? Why?
2. Should Mama have hit Mattie? Should Mattie tell another another adult that her mother hit her?
3. What is going on inside Charlene? Inside Angel?

STORY RETELL

1. What does Mama do when Mattie is late returning from Stern's? When Mattie is an hour late returning from her shopping trip, her mother loses her temper and slaps Mattie in the face. Mattie has never been hit by a parent before and she is hurt and humiliated.
2. What does Mattie find at Stern's? At Stern's Department Store, Mattie finds a gold pin with a pearl in it to buy for her Mother's Day gift. She puts it on layaway and has thirty days to pay for the expensive piece of jewelry.
3. Why do Mattie and Matt think they're not a family anymore? Matt and Mattie think they're not a family because her mother won't celebrate Mother's Day. Because her mother doesn't kiss her or speak kindly to her, Mattie thinks her mother doesn't love or need her anymore.
4. Who is Mrs. Stamps, and what role does she play in Mattie's life? Mrs. Stamps is an older woman who lives in Toni's apartment building. She is like an aunt to the girls, and likes to invite them over for tea and cake. She is very sympathetic to their troubles, and offers wise advice.
5. How does Toni suggest that Mattie earn money for a Mother's Day gift? What does Mattie think of this idea? Toni suggests that Mattie enter a Mother's Day essay contest held by the local newspaper in hopes of winning the fifty dollar prize money. Mattie doesn't think she has much of a chance because she is not a good writer.

ADVENTURES IN WRITING

1. Pretend that you are entering the Mother's Day essay contest. What would you write?
2. Mrs. Stamps is writing a letter to Mattie to comfort her. What would she say? Remember to write from Mrs. Stamps' point of view!

EXTENSION IDEAS

1. If you were in Mattie's shoes, how would you earn money? Brainstorm with the class how young people can earn money after school.
2. How much money does it take to support Mattie's family? How much money do you think her mother earns? How much does she pay for rent, food, utilities, etc.? Find out how much factory workers in your area earn, and make a budget of how much it would cost for Mattie's family to live in your neighborhood.
3. How many African-Americans live in Chicago today? When did many black families move to northern cities like Chicago? Do some research in the library to learn the history of the black residents of Chicago or other northern cities.

STORY TEST

1. What happens at Stern's Department Store? After shopping for clothes, Mattie finds a piece of jewelry that she thinks is the perfect Mother's Day gift. It is a gold circle pin, and it is very expensive. Mattie goes home to get more money to put it on layaway, and is trying to earn the rest of the money to buy it.
2. What happens when Mattie is late returning from Stern's? When Mattie is an hour late returning from her shopping trip, her mother loses her temper and slaps her in the face. Mattie has never been hit by a parent before, and she is hurt and humiliated.
3. How does Toni think that Mattie can earn money for her Mother's Day gift? What does Mattie think of this idea? Toni suggests that Mattie enter a Mother's Day essay contest held by the local newspaper in hopes of winning the fifty dollar prize money. Mattie doesn't think she has much of a chance because she is not a good writer.
4. Why do Mattie and Matt think they're not a family anymore? Matt and Mattie think they're not a family because her mother won't celebrate Mother's Day. Because her mother doesn't kiss her or speak kindly to her, Mattie thinks her mother doesn't love or need her anymore.
5. Who is Mrs. Stamps, and why is she important to Mattie? Mrs. Stamps is an older woman who lives in Toni's apartment building. She is like an aunt to the girls, and likes to invite them over for tea and cake. She is very sympathetic to their troubles, and offers wise advice.

Circle of Gold

by Candy Dawson Boyd

TREASURE HUNT # 3
Teacher's Guide
Chapters 7, 8 & 9

WORD MASTERY LIST

* ample	* urgently	* genuinely
sauntered	glower	brooding
* stalked	sniped	* taunted
* edgy	forged	scheme
cashmere	ointment	

TREASURE HUNT

Section I. Stop at the end of chapter eight. Discuss the answers to the questions with your partner. Then write your answers, while your partner answers separately.

1. Why doesn't Mattie want to tell Toni that her mother hit her? Mattie doesn't want to tell Toni that her mother hit her because she is hurt and humiliated and wants to forget about it.
2. How does Angel treat Charlene? Angel is cruel to Charlene, criticizes her, and makes fun of her in front of other girls.
3. Why is Mama angry at Matt and Mattie? Mama is angry at Matt and Mattie because they talked to Reverend Harris about her. She yells at them for taking their troubles outside the family.
4. How does Angel respond when she sees her math test grade? When Angel sees how poorly she did on the math test, she blames it on Mattie and writes her another threatening note with a skull and crossbones.
5. Why does Matt want to do well in school? Matt wants to do well in school because he has always wanted his father to be proud of him. He felt like his father loved Mattie more, and wanted to earn his favor.
6. Why does Mattie want to give Mama the pin? Mattie wants to give Mama the pin so she will know how much Mattie loves her. She thinks that if Mama knows how much Mattie loves her, things will be better in their house.
7. What did Mattie ask Toni to do? Mattie asked Toni to write an essay for her and sign it with Mattie's name.

Prediction: What is Mattie's plan? Will it work?

Section II. Read chapter nine. Discuss the answers to the questions with your partner, then write your answers separately.

1. How does Angel use her bracelet to taunt her friends? Angel brags about the bracelet and is very cruel. She waves it in front of Charlene, knowing that she is too poor to have such an expensive gift, and reminds Mattie that she doesn't have a father anymore to buy her expensive gifts.
2. How does Toni feel about writing an essay for Mattie? Toni knows it is wrong and feels very uncomfortable about it. But she writes the essay because she wants to help her friend get the pin.
3. What happens to Angel's bracelet at school? What does Mr. Ashby do about it? During lunch, the bracelet disappears from Angel's desk. She screams that someone has stolen it, and blames Mattie. Mr. Ashby can't figure out if Mattie stole it, so arranges a meeting with the girls, Mattie's mother, and Angel's father at school.
4. Why is Matt discouraged? Matt is discouraged because he might lose his paper route, and there are no other jobs available in his neighborhood.
5. What does Toni think about the stolen bracelet? Toni thinks that Angel has hidden her bracelet and is blaming Mattie to get her into trouble.
6. What does Mattie see in her mother's room? How does this make her feel? Mattie sees her mother sleeping in her father's cashmere coat. She realizes how much she misses her father, and is even more determined to get the pin for her mother.

NOTEWORTHY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why does Charlene let Angel treat her so badly?
2. Was it wrong for Mattie's mother to hit her? Should Mattie have told another adult that her mother hit her?
3. Is Mattie expecting the gift to do too much?
4. Should Toni have written the essay for Mattie?

STORY RETELL

1. What happens at school to give Mattie something else to worry about? One day, Angel comes to school wearing an expensive new bracelet her father bought her. When the bracelet is stolen at lunch, she blames Mattie. Mattie's mother will have to take off from work to come in and meet with the teacher.
2. What does Mattie ask Toni to do to help her win the essay contest? Mattie asks Toni to write an essay for her and sign Mattie's name to it. Toni knows this is cheating and is uncomfortable with this, but does it anyway to help her friend.
3. What happens when Angel gets her math test back? When Angel gets her math test back, she has done very poorly. She blames Mattie because she would not cheat, and writes another threatening letter with a skull and crossbones and puts it in Mattie's desk.
4. What does Mrs. Stamps say when Mattie tells her that Mama hit her? Mrs. Stamps is very sympathetic and gives Mattie some ointment to put on her cheek. But she also tells Mattie that her mother is not herself lately and is under too much pressure. She thinks that Mrs. Benson should talk to a counselor or her pastor.

5. How does Mrs. Benson act after hitting Mattie? Mrs. Benson is sorry and apologizes to Mattie. She tells Mattie that Mrs. Stamps and Reverend Harris are right and that she does need to talk to someone about her troubles.

ADVENTURES IN WRITING

1. Write a Mother's Day poem or essay for your mother or grandmother.
2. Pretend that you are Mattie, and write her winning Mother's Day essay.
3. Try to predict how the story is going to end, and write a summary which explains how everything turns out at the end of the book.
4. Pretend that Mr. Ashby can't determine who, if anyone, stole the bracelet. He makes the girls write an essay about "Why stealing (or lying) is wrong." Write an essay on this subject.

EXTENSION IDEAS

1. Find a poem about mothers in a poetry anthology.
2. Find a copy of Bartlett's Familiar Quotations or another collection of quotations. Look up "mother" and find a quote to share with the class.
3. Find out how much a paper route earns in your neighborhood. How many papers does the worker have to deliver? How long does it take? How much does the delivery person earn per hour? How much per paper does the delivery person earn?
4. Many famous African-American leaders had jobs when they were young. (For example, Booker T. Washington worked in a mine.) Select a leader and find out what he/she did to earn money as a child or young adult.

STORY TEST

1. What happens when Charlene brings a new, expensive bracelet to school? Charlene leaves her new bracelet in her desk during lunch. When she returns after lunch, she screams that it is stolen. She blames Mattie, and Mr. Ashby tells Mattie her mother will have to come to school to meet with him and Angel's father.
2. What does Mattie do to try to win the essay contest? How does Toni feel about this? Mattie asks Toni to write an essay for her and sign Mattie's name to it. Toni is uncomfortable and knows this is wrong, but she agrees to do it to help her friend.
3. Why is Mrs. Benson mad at Matt and Mattie? Mrs. Benson is angry when Matt and Mattie talk to Reverend Harris about Mama. She says they were wrong to talk about their troubles outside the family.
4. What happens when Angel gets her math test back? When Angel gets her math test back, she blames Mattie for her low grade. She writes another threatening letter with a skull and crossbones and puts it in Mattie's desk.
5. What does Mrs. Stamps say when Mattie tells her that Mama hit her? Mrs. Stamps is very sympathetic and gives Mattie some ointment to put on her cheek. But she also tells Mattie that her mother is not herself lately and is under too much pressure. She thinks that Mrs. Benson should talk to a counselor or her pastor.

Circle of Gold

by Candy Dawson Boyd

TREASURE HUNT # 4
Teacher's Guide
Chapters 10 & 11

WORD MASTERY LIST

flounce
* emphatically
warily
sentiments
vigorously
* shrill
Dar-Es-Salaam
* soothed
mused
* cringe
* mournfully
triumph
* relented

TREASURE HUNT

Section I. Stop at the end of chapter ten. Discuss the answers to the questions with your partner. Then write your answers, while your partner answers separately.

1. How does Toni plan to find out who, if anyone, stole Angel's bracelet? Toni plans to make friends with Angel and Charlene and pretend to ignore Mattie in order to find out about the stolen bracelet.
2. Because she feels sad and lonely, where does Mattie go? When she feels sad and lonely, Mattie rides the bus to the park where she and her dad found the gingko tree. She feels connected with her father there, and it gives her strength.
3. What does Toni say about Charlene? Toni says that Charlene isn't so bad, and that she just needs someone to care about her. She says that no one cares about Charlene.
4. Why is Matt happy? Matt is happy because he made the basketball team, and he will not lose his paper route.
5. Why do the girls decide to meet at Mrs. Stamps'? Toni and Mattie agree to meet at Mrs. Stamps' home because they cannot be together at school or at church, where Angel and Charlene might see them.
6. What warning does Mrs. Stamps offer Mattie about the pin? Mrs. Stamps warns Mattie that buying the pin for her mother won't solve all the problems of the family. She thinks Mattie is expecting the pin to do too much.
7. What does Mattie appreciate about Mrs. Stamps? Mattie likes the fact that with Mrs. Stamps, things stay the same. She can depend on Mrs. Stamps to listen to her and care about her.

Prediction: What did Toni call to tell Mattie?

Section II. Read chapter eleven. Discuss the answers to the questions with your partner, then write your answers separately.

1. **What does Mrs. Stamps say about "skin-stretching times" ?** Mrs. Stamps says that if Mattie mailed in her own essay, she may be in for a skin-stretching time, or a chance to take a risk and grow inside.
2. **Who does Toni think stole the bracelet?** Toni thinks that Charlene stole the bracelet.
3. **How does Angel treat Charlene away from school?** Angel treats Charlene even worse when they are away from school. She laughs at her, makes fun of her clothes, how poor she is, and how she looks.
4. **What happens when Mrs. Benson, Mr. Ashby, and Angel's father meet about the bracelet?** Angel's father believes his daughter and thinks that Mattie took the bracelet. He wants it back and the thief punished. Mrs. Benson defends Mattie and says she did not take the bracelet.

NOTEWORTHY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **What motive would Charlene have to steal the bracelet?**
2. **Is there any proof that Mattie stole the bracelet? What does "circumstantial evidence" mean?**
3. **Why does Angel treat Charlene so badly?**
4. **Do you think Toni's plan to make friends with Angel and Charlene is a good one?**

STORY RETELL

1. **What happens when Mama, Matt, and Mattie plan to go to the movies?** Mrs. Benson promises to take the twins to the movies, but gets a headache. Matt and Mattie assume that she won't want to take them out. But she does take them to the movies, and they have a wonderful time together.
2. **How does Toni plan to find out who, if anyone, stole Angel's bracelet?** Toni plans to make friends with Angel and Charlene and pretend to ignore Mattie in order to find out about the stolen bracelet.
3. **Because she feels sad and lonely, where does Mattie go?** When she feels sad and lonely, Mattie rides the bus to the park where she and her dad found the gingko tree. She feels connected with her father there, and it gives her strength.
4. **What advice does Mrs. Stamps give about the pin and the essay?** Mrs. Stamps warns Mattie not to expect the pin to make everything right in her family. She also tells Mattie that if she sent in her own essay, she should be ready for some "skin-stretching times," meaning a time when she will take risks and grow emotionally.
5. **Who does Toni think stole the bracelet, and why?** Toni now thinks that Charlene stole the bracelet from Angel. She thinks that because Angel is so cruel to her, Charlene would steal the bracelet to get back at her.

ADVENTURES IN WRITING

1. **Pretend that Matt did lose his paper route, and is looking for another job. Write a business letter or resume (a list of his job experiences and qualifications) that he might give to potential employers.**

2. Angel does not know how to be a friend to Charlene. Write a letter to Angel, explaining how to be a good friend to someone, and how to treat a friend.
3. Write a letter to Mr. Higgley (Angel's father) politely explaining that you did not steal the bracelet. Remember to write from Mattie's point of view.

EXTENSION IDEAS

1. How much would a bracelet like Angel's cost? Look at some newspaper ads or catalogues to find out. If Mattie's mother earns $ 9.00 per hour at the factory, how many hours would she have to work to earn it? If Mattie earns $3.00 an hour baby-sitting, how many hours would she have to work to earn it? If Mr. Higgley earns $30 an hour, how many hours would he have to work to earn it? Don't forget to pay sales tax on your "purchase."
2. Find out about the gingko tree from the encyclopedia.
3. How much would it cost for Matt, Mattie, and Mama to go to a first-run movie in your neighborhood? Don't forget to buy them popcorn or candy and a drink!

STORY TEST

1. How does Toni plan to find out about Angel's missing bracelet? Toni plans to make friends with Angel and Charlene and pretend to ignore Mattie in order to find out about the stolen bracelet.
2. Why does Mattie go to the park with the ginkgo tree? Because she feels sad and lonely, Mattie rides the bus to the park where she and her dad found the gingko tree. She feels connected with her father there, and it gives her strength.
3. What advice does Mrs. Stamps give the girls about the pin, the essay, and risk-taking? Mrs. Stamps warns Mattie not to expect the pin to make everything right in her family. She also tells Mattie that if she sent in her own essay, she should be ready for some "skin-stretching times," meaning a time when she will take risks and grow emotionally.
4. Who does Toni think stole the bracelet? What motive would she have to steal it? Toni now thinks that Charlene stole the bracelet from Angel. She thinks that because Angel is so cruel to her, Charlene would steal the bracelet to get back at her.
5. What happens when Mrs. Benson, Mr. Ashby, and Angel's father meet to discuss the missing bracelet? Angel's father believes his daughter and thinks that Mattie took the bracelet. He wants it back and the thief punished. Mrs. Benson defends Mattie and says she did not take the bracelet.

Circle of Gold

by Candy Dawson Boyd

TREASURE HUNT # 5
Teacher's Guide
Chapters 12 ,13 & 14

WORD MASTERY LIST

fumed	* viciously	slyly
* morale	cowered	reprimand
* slumped	psychologist	crystal
* inquired	sashayed	* efficiently
* fragile		

TREASURE HUNT

Section I. Stop at the end of chapter thirteen. Discuss the answers to the questions with your partner. Then write your answers, while your partner answers separately.

1. What happens to cause Mattie to lose her temper at school and push Angel? Mattie feels that everyone at school is treating her like a thief, and then Angel tells her she hopes that Mattie gets thrown out of school for good. When Angel pinches Mattie, she loses her temper and pushes Angel.

2. What does Mr. Ashby think about the fight between Angel and Mattie? Does he think Mattie stole the bracelet? Mr. Ashby tells Mattie it was wrong to push Angel, even if Angel did pinch her first. He says he is not sure as he once was that Mattie stole the bracelet. He also says that Mattie was right to return to the classroom after running away.

3. Why does Toni tell Charlene that she couldn't have seen Mattie steal the bracelet? Toni tells Charlene that she couldn't have seen Mattie steal the bracelet because Charlene took it herself. Toni found it in Charlene's jacket pocket.

4. Why did Toni suspect that Charlene had taken the bracelet? Toni suspected that Charlene had taken the bracelet because she noticed that Charlene kept fingering something in her pocket on the way to school in the morning.

5. What will happen to Charlene? Charlene is suspended from school for two weeks and given a reprimand by the principal.

6. What happens when Mattie goes to Stern's to ask for more time? When she goes to Stern's to ask for more time to buy the pin, she learns that it was purchased the day before. Mattie has miscounted by one day.

7. Where does Mrs. Benson say that she has been going after work? Mrs. Benson says she has been going to see a psychiatrist to help her get over her husband's death and pull the family together.

Prediction: What will Mattie's letter from the newspaper say?

Section II. Read chapter fourteen. Discuss the answers to the questions with your partner, then write your answers separately.

1. What does the letter from the newspaper say? The letter from the newspaper says that she has tied for first place, and tells her to bring her mother and a friend to pick up the prize at the newspaper office and have her picture taken.
2. How does Mrs. Benson feel about Mattie entering the essay contest? Mrs. Benson is very touched that Mattie loves her enough to enter the contest, and she is proud of Mattie for winning.
3. How does Mrs. Benson decide to celebrate Mother's Day? Mrs. Benson decides to celebrate Mother's Day as Family Day and buys a new dress for Mattie and new paints for Matt.
4. What present does Mattie's winning essay earn for her mother? After reading Mattie's essay, the people from the newspaper buy the gold and pearl pin from Stern's for Mrs. Benson. They give her the pin when she and Mattie go to the newspaper office to collect Mattie's prize.
5. What did Matt give his mother for Mother's Day? Matt painted a portrait of himself, Mattie, and Mama for Mother's Day.
6. Why is a CIRCLE pin an appropriate symbol for Mattie and her family? What does Mattie say about a circle? Reasons for the appropriateness of a circle pin as a symbol for Mattie's family will vary. Answers might include the fact that a circle never ends, and Mattie's family, although changed by the death of her father, will not end. Also, Mattie says she has made a place for herself in the circle of her family.

NOTEWORTHY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Who says she saw Mattie steal the bracelet? Why does she say this?
2. Why is Mattie worried about what to tell Toni?
3. What do you think of Mattie's essay?
4. What does Mattie feel at the end of the book, when she is singing a solo in church?

STORY RETELL

1. How is the mystery of the stolen bracelet solved? Who stole it? Toni solves the mystery of the stolen bracelet. When she walks to school in the morning with Charlene, she notices that Charlene is fingering something in her jacket pocket. She looks in the pocket to see, and finds the stolen bracelet.
2. What happens when Mattie goes to Stern's to ask for more time? When Mattie goes to Stern's to ask for more time to pay for the pin, she learns that it was purchased the day before. She has miscounted by one day, and now the pin is gone.
3. What does the letter from the newspaper say? The letter from the newspaper says she has tied for first place in the essay contest, and instructs her to bring her mother and a friend to the newspaper office to get the prize and have her photo taken.
4. What risk did Mattie take that caused her to grow? Mattie sent in her own essay rather than cheat and send in Toni's essay, even though Toni is a better writer.
5. What does Mrs. Benson do to help pull the family together? Mrs. Benson goes to see a psychiatrist to help her adjust to Mr. Benson's death. She begins to try to pull the family together by taking the twins out to a movie, and celebrating Family Day.

ADVENTURES IN WRITING

1. Write another chapter of the book in which Mattie, Toni, and Mrs. Stamps become friends with Charlene.
2. Pretend that Toni and Mattie feel sorry for Charlene, and write her letters about what is going on at school in her absence. Write the letters they would send.
3. Do you think Charlene's suspension was fair? Why or why not? Write a short essay which persuades the reader of your position.

EXTENSION IDEAS

1. Do newspapers in your area ever have contests for students? Find an essay contest and enter it. Ask your teacher or librarian for help in finding a contest.
2. Paint or draw a portrait of your family, or of Mattie's family.
3. Why do you think Circle of Gold was a Coretta Scott King Award Honor Book? What values does it embrace which Dr. King believed in?

STORY TEST

1. Why does Mattie lose her temper at school and push Angel? Mattie feels that everyone at school is treating her like a thief, and then Angel tells her she hopes that Mattie gets thrown out of school for good. When Angel pinches Mattie, she loses her temper and pushes Angel.
2. Who solves the mystery of the stolen bracelet ? Who is the thief? Toni solves the mystery of the stolen bracelet. When she walks to school in the morning with Charlene, she notices that Charlene is fingering something in her jacket pocket. She looks in the pocket to see, and finds the stolen bracelet.
3. What happens when Mattie goes to Stern's to ask for more time? When Mattie goes to Stern's to ask for more time to pay for the pin, she learns that it was purchased the day before. She has miscounted by one day, and now the pin is gone.
4. What does the letter from the newspaper say? The letter from the newspaper says she has tied for first place in the essay contest, and instructs her to bring her mother and a friend to the newspaper office to get the prize and have her photo taken.
5. What does Mrs. Benson do to help pull the family together? Mrs. Benson goes to see a psychiatrist to help her adjust to Mr. Benson's death. She begins to pull the family together by taking the twins out to a movie and celebrating Family Day.

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